MONTANA AUTUMN

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NATURE'S GRANDEST SHOW

WHAT ABOUT THE WEATHER?

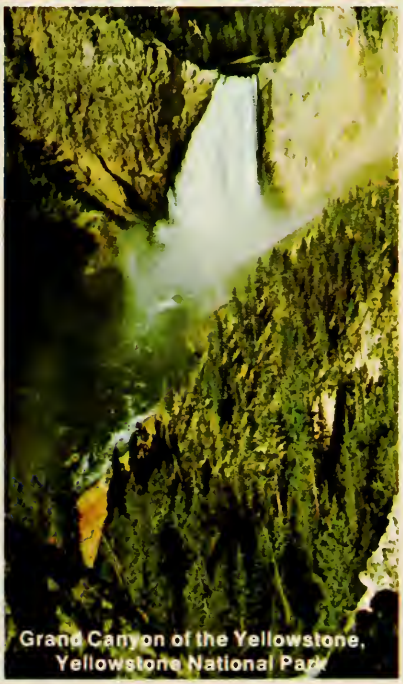
Indian Summer in the Big Sky Country is dividend time. Days are warm, nights are cool. The sun can be so intense you'll rely on your car's air conditioner...but at night you may wish for your electric blanket. As the season advances you may encounter stormy periods in the high country... but come prepared and you'll enjoy the time of your life. No...Montana does NOT freeze over after Labor Day. In fact...September, October, November can be the golden time for a memorable vacation.

WHAT ABOUT THE NATIONAL PARKS?

Nature puts on her grandest show for the autumn visitors to Montana's National Parks. Skies are brilliant, colors are magnificent, the pace is leisurely, the trails and roads are uncrowded. Here's what to expect in two of the nation's most spectacular scenic parks:

GLACIER NATIONAL PARK

As the last of nearly a million and a half visitors leave, Glacier becomes a wonderland of stillness and color. The leaves of tamarack (larch), cottonwood, aspen, and paper birch turn golden yellow while the currant, mountain ash and Douglas maple add a dash of fiery red. All this against a backdrop of lofty peaks dusted with a skift of new snow... Magnificent! The animals, too, know that a change has come: the pika has grasses harvested, dried and put away like miniature haystacks. Mountain goats and mountain sheep who so recently look patchy and shaggy as they shed now are sleek in their new thick fur coats. One of the most interesting dramas unfolds mid-October through November at the mouth of Lake McDonald on the west side of the park. Here the kokanee or landlocked salmon are spawning and in their death throes their bodies flutter down the stream where they are eagerly seized by the bald eagle and an occasional grizzly bear. Where do the eagles come from? Only a few of them are summer residents...yet through some mysterious communication hundreds of these majestic birds descend on this tiny area to enjoy the feast. The birds may be observed from spe-



MN...last of the big

cially prepared blinds for photographers and from the two major bridges that cross McDonald Creek. Park Naturalists are on hand to interpret the story. Over 300 bald eagles have been counted in one 24-hour period on this short mile and a half of creek. The days will be warm for awhile and the famous Going-to-the-Sun Road will remain open until closed by snow in mid-October. Bright forests of color against vivid skies of blue and the ever-present promise of a blanket of white soon to cover the park lure travelers to just one more peek at this mountain wilderness in northwest Montana.

YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK

Fiery red Rocky Mountain Maple brighten forests of green Douglas Fir. Quaking Aspen sprinkle shimmers of yellow against a blue sky breeze. Frost reddened wild geraniums, squawbush and huckleberry complement golden hued cottonwood trees. Autumn has come to Yellowstone. Nature produces her most spectacular show for those who choose to visit Yellowstone National Park in the autumn. Yellowstone Park wildlife are often at their most entertaining in the autumn. Moose, deer, elk and even bison may be seen near the roadsides this time of year as they begin to graze the lower elevations. Bull elk, their magnificent antlers now polished and hard, provide visitors with a glimpse of wild ways in the fall as their mating season begins. Elk, in prime autumn condition, may be seen in the meadows "bugling" as they call a mate or challenge other bulls. Elk may be found throughout most of Yellowstone's more than two million acres. Old Faithful Geyser and her thousands of neighbors, of course, remain year round attractions. Many lodging and recreation facilities are open through the park's usually mild Indian Summer. Lodging will be available in the Old Faithful area until October 7. Yellowstone Lake area will have accommodations through October 6. And Mammoth Hot Springs Hotel and Cabins is open even later — through October 8. The turn of the season brings a peace to the park. Many summer vacationers have departed and the fall visitor can spend time alone with nature — watching the first snows silver the mountain peaks or relaxing in front of a crackling fire.

THREE NATIONAL MONUMENTS

and recreation areas are open daily and welcome you to explore and browse: the Big Hole National Battlefield near Wisdom, the Custer Battlefield National Monument southeast of Billings and Hardin, the Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area on the Montana-Wyoming border south of Billings.

time splendors

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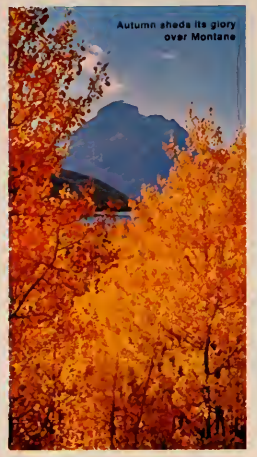
Rare trumpeter swans at Red Rock Lakes

Montana's Capitol glows in Autumn sunshine

Fish panning for the real thing


Autumn sheds its glory over Montana

One of Montana's prize brown trout

A glimpse of frisky Eastern Montana natives

Charles M. Russell original oil "Men Of The Open Range." Montana Historical Society

SHUTTERBUG?

The reds, the auburns, the golds of a Montana autumn landscape mixed with the green of the pines and blue of the Big Sky help you compose picture-perfect photos. Take advantage of the lengthening shadows, the deeper blue skies, the color contrasts. Wildlife is often easier to spot and photograph... ideal photo locations are less crowded. For special consideration we suggest: Wolf Creek Canyon between Great Falls and Helena, Glacier National Park, the Bitterroot Valley (U.S. 93 South of Missoula), the Gallatin Canyon (U.S. 191 South of Bozeman), the Little Belt Mountains near Monarch (U.S. 89 Southeast of Great Falls). Color time is late September and early October.

AND SPEAKING OF FISHING...

many consider fall as the best time of year for angling in the Treasure State. Cooler weather and water, little competition, and brown trout during their annual spawning treks all add up to unmatched fishing enjoyment. For the confirmed fly rod enthusiast, streamer flies such as the muddler minnow generally produce the best results during the fall unless you can "match a hatch." But hardware and a variety of baits also yield good catches. ■ Some of the better fall trout producers include the upper Yellowstone near Livingston, the Gallatin near Bozeman, the Madison near Ennis and upstream from Three Forks, the Jefferson, Big Hole and Beaverhead rivers in southwest Montana, the Missouri River from Helena to Great Falls, and Big Spring Creek near Lewistown. But during the fall months you can try any Montana trout stream and expect good results. ■ Many Montana trout streams close at the end of November, but selected waters remain open year around. The nonresident seasonal fishing license is $20...$10 for a six day license or $2 for a one day license plus a $1 conservation license. For additional information contact the Montana Department of Fish and Game, Helena, Montana 59601.

GOLD PANNING

may not make your fortune, but you'll strike it rich in fun. It's exciting for young (and not so young)...and there's plenty of "color" left in our streams. Besides, who really cares whether you start another gold rush as long as you're in the big outdoors, breathing the un-breathed air and enjoying the rich glow of autumn.

FIND A SAPPHIRE...

or a ruby...or a garnet...or an agate...or a piece of petrified wood. This is rockhounders' paradise in the lazy and sun-filled days of autumn. Pack a picnic lunch, your rock gear, a camera and head for the hills. Be sure to get permission to rockhound if you find yourself on private property.

WANT TO PITCH A TENT

or park your trailer? There's plenty of space in state, federal and private campgrounds. It's a quiet, restful time to be out and away from the crowds...a good time to hike winding trails, sit by placid lakes, take your bike off the beaten path or perhaps do a little fishing.

HISTORY...WHERE TO FIND IT.

Montana has 31 National Historic Landmarks ranging from the Custer Battlefield National Monument in the eastern section of the state to Beaverhead Rock, Bannack and Butte in the western portion. The landmarks include historic forts, a giant ranch established in the mid 1800's, an early 1800 steamboat town, a Continental Divide pass used by Lewis and Clark as well as their portage route near Great Falls, and others of equal historic significance. Write us for a complete listing before you travel.

MONTANA YESTERDAYS

are here, still. Enjoy a stroll along the Missouri River levee in the historic town of Fort Benton, once a busy navigation port. Peer in the shop and business establishment windows at Virginia and Nevada City...now restored to the grandeur of Gold Rush Days in Alder Gulch. Explore fascinating Helena, Montana's capital city...once the home of many millionaires. See where gold was discovered, visit the pioneer cabin, prowl gentle Reeder's Alley (now an area of art shops and antique nooks), tour the former Governor's Mansion and see the huge Charles M. Russell original mural in the Capitol's House of Representatives chambers. Explore a ghost mining town...prod and poke and photograph all you want...but leave the history intact for those who follow. It's all here...unhurried, uncrowded...waiting for you.

EVER HEARD OF RANCH VACATIONING?

65 Montana Farms and Ranches have indicated that they would like to host visitors for a 'different' type rural vacation. Accommodations vary from meals and lodging in a family home to lodging in separate dwellings to individual campsites for your own unit. Some offer fishing and hunting services, some rockhounding, swimming, riding, hiking and actually working on the ranch (in season). Write us for a complete list developed in cooperation with our State Cooperative Extension Service.

VISIT A WESTERN MUSEUM...

take your time, the crowds have thinned, the browsing is great. Most state and community museums remain open year around...with perhaps slightly reduced hours after Labor Day. For instance: the Historical Society Museum in Helena goes to these hours after Labor Day: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays, 12 noon to 5 p.m. weekends and holidays. Check our Vacation Booklet for a complete listing of museums.

WHAT ABOUT STATE PARKS?

Lewis and Clark Caverns State Park remains open for guided tours until September 30. Tours are $1 for adults, 50¢ for children and last 90 minutes. Other state parks and recreation areas remain open for camping, hiking, picnicking, boating, fishing as long as weather permits. Write us for a complete listing of locations and facilities.

MONTANA AUTUMN...last of the big time splendors

EVER HEARD OF A BUFFALO ROUNDUP?

Montana has one every autumn during the first week in October at the National Bison Range near Moiese. The roundup is reminiscent of another era...part of the living heritage of this country's Western past. It's like watching history...except the bison, instead of being headed for extinction, are headed for preservation. The animals are rounded up, examined, calves are vaccinated, selected animals cut out for propagating other herds. Visitors are welcome...picnic areas are nearby...accommodations are available in neighboring towns. The Bison Range is about 40 miles northwest of Missoula off U.S. 93...in the beautiful Mission Valley between the Continental Divide and the Bitterroot Mountains.

MONTANA IS INDIAN COUNTRY...

the home of seven North American Indian Tribes...all of whom welcome you as you travel. You'll enjoy the craft and art displays, you'll enjoy the museums and historical exhibits. Be sure to visit the Museum of the Plains Indian at Browning (Blackfeet Reservation) for an excellent story in exhibits and dioramas...and the new Chief Plenty Coups Museum near Pryor (35 miles south of Billings). The latter is on the Crow Reservation.

FOLLOW A TRAIL...

Two major historic trails cross Montana...paralleled today by modern roads and interstate highways. Look for highway signs indicating that you're on the **Lewis and Clark Trail** or the **Old West Trail.** Explorers Lewis and Clark spent more time in Montana than in any of the other 10 states through which their trek led them. Today you can ride in comfort over much the same terrain...learn first hand of the hardships and accomplishments. When you follow the Old West Trail you'll see and enjoy some of Montana's finest western attractions. Write us for brochures and maps.

TRAFFIC JAMS?

Not in Montana! Drive the wide-open interstate and primary highways... explore the excellent state highways and byways. Drive at your own speed at your own time of day...enjoy the scenery, stop when you like, go when you like and leave the congestion behind. Going-to-the-Sun Road in Glacier National Park and the Beartooth Highway (U.S. 212) to Yellowstone National Park remain open until at least mid-October... others are open year around.

AND WHEN THE SNOW FLIES...

come back again to enjoy Montana's incomparable winter sports activities: skiing on uncrowded slopes, cross-country skiing mile upon mile, snowmobiling in almost every community, snow coach tours into Yellowstone National Park, skating, ice fishing and magnificent winter scenery. Write us for a complete list of winter recreation areas...and come back to see us SOON.

For any additional information write:
Advertising Unit Montana Department of Highways
Helena, Montana 59601